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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
9 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

State Dept. review  
completed

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 15

(As of 1200 EDT)

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THE MILITARY SITUATION

MORI/CDF per C03316196

GENERAL

1. The war continues to be bitterly contested on both fronts. Tel Aviv is beginning to issue more sober appraisals of the situation, and there is no indication that the Israelis have achieved their anticipated breakthrough in Syria. Tel Aviv appears to be preparing the Israeli public for hard days of fighting ahead. Israeli correspondents are now reporting "bitter battles" against "an immense invasion force" in the Sinai.

2. The Syrians continue to fight well on the Golan Heights. Despite the Israeli counterattack, the Syrians do not appear to have been driven from all areas they captured in the last few days nor have they broken as the Israelis had anticipated.

3. The most recent fighting appears to have involved the continued engagement of the Israeli air force against both the Syrians and Egyptians. In the Sinai, the Israelis are concentrating on the Egyptian forces close to the canal particularly in the northern sector. The Israelis also returned to the Syrian front attacking the cities of Damascus and Homs in the interior. In contrast to their concentration on purely tactical targets in previous days, the Israelis apparently broadened their target list to include Syria's only oil refinery and its military headquarters in the Damascus area.

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EGYPTIAN FRONT

4. The Israelis continue to bomb heavily in the vicinity of the Suez Canal with the air raids concentrated in the north from the Great Bitter Lake to Port Said. The Israelis bombed Port Said and a neighboring airfield heavily yesterday, but air attacks have also been detected in the vicinity of Ismailiyah and Qantara. The Egyptians apparently have concentrated most of their forces in this area.

5. The Egyptians claim little significant damage from yesterday's air attacks, but do admit to considerable damage to Port Said.

[REDACTED]

6. In contrast to the air activity, there seems to have been little ground action along the canal with the forces concentrating on artillery duels. In a summation of the ground action along the canal, General Herzog, the former head of Israeli military intelligence, publicly appraised the situation along the canal as a "war of attrition" against a numerically superior enemy. The general hinted at a future offensive, however, stating that Israel is not only going to return to the former cease-fire lines, but is going to make certain they do not "have to face this situation again."

[REDACTED]

8. The Israelis have extended their air raids against Egypt to the city of Cairo. A US correspondent reported this afternoon Cairo time that he was in the middle of an air raid before the telephone went dead. Earlier two airfields north of Cairo were hit.

[REDACTED]

25X1 [redacted] The Egyptians admit having suffered 3,000-4,000 casualties, but state that they can accept this as their estimates prior to the attack anticipated much higher casualties.

10. In anticipation of today's action, the Egyptians claim to be planning for air attacks on Israel proper with their bomber force that has been held in reserve. [redacted]

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25X1 [redacted] The Egyptians have been raiding the southern Sinai periodically with commando groups since the war began with little success.

12. According to the appraisal, the initial Egyptian goals were to advance east of the canal up to, and including, the mountain passes controlling access to the Sinai but now are encouraged and are considering an advance across the peninsula to reclaim "all of Sinai."

#### SYRIAN FRONT

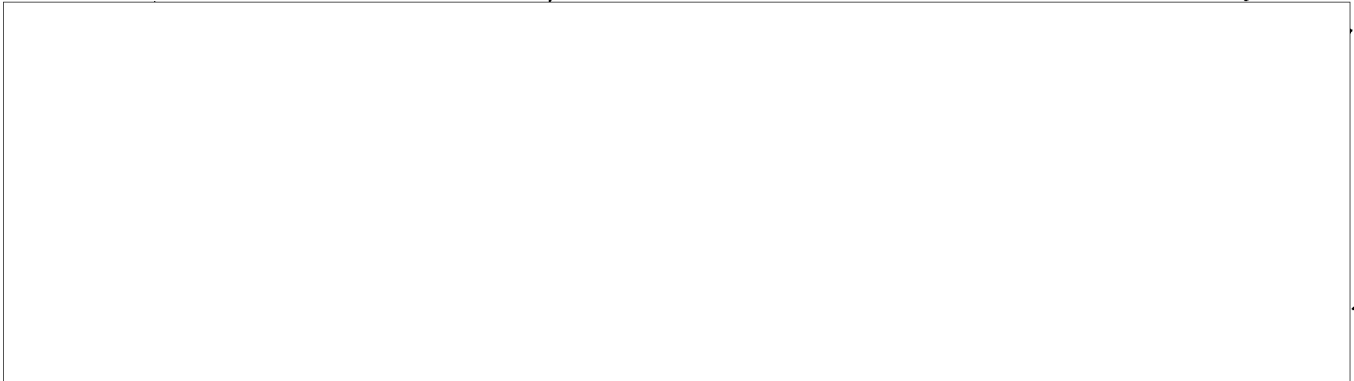
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15. Reporting on the ground situation is sparse but Israel does not seem to be making much progress. According to an Israeli spokesman, Syrian forces are still holding along the 1967 cease-fire line. He claimed that the Syrians lost four helicopters this morning when they attempted a small heliborne raid on al-Ram in the northern Golan Heights.

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16. According to a UN observer, the Syrians apparently were advancing in the northern sector of the Golan Heights near observation post one this morning. He stated that there were no signs that the Syrians were retreating across the cease-fire line and were in control of UN observation posts three, four and six on the Israeli side.

LATE MILITARY ACTIVITY



18. A press dispatch from Beirut reports an Israeli bombing of a Lebanese radar post in the Mount Lebanon range 24 miles from Beirut.

SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

19. Most of the ships in the Soviet naval squadron in the eastern Mediterranean are now located in normal anchorages at Kithera, north and east of Crete, and there are no indications of Soviet naval support for Egyptian or Syrian engagements with Israel. The Soviet reaction appears geared toward the evacuation of Soviet nationals from Alexandria and Latakia, withdrawal of Soviet ships from Egypt,



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OIL

23. According to press reports, Kuwait called today for an immediate meeting of Arab oil ministers to discuss the role of petroleum in the current crisis. The emergency meeting of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (AOPEC) could be for the purpose of discussing the flow of Arab oil to Western consumer countries. Some of the Arab ministers who will be called to attend the session are currently attending the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) conference in Vienna.

24. Today's Journal of Commerce reports that three Arab Mediterranean oil terminals--Baniyas (IPC/Syria); Tripoli (IPC/Lebanon); and Sidon (Tapline/Lebanon)--have been closed

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to shipping presumably as a result of the current crisis.

If the terminals have been shut down, it would represent a flow stoppage of approximately 1.6 million barrels per day, almost all of which goes to Western Europe.

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#### UNITED NATIONS

25. There appears little chance for UN action on Middle East hostilities until ground positions are consolidated. The Security Council is unable to issue any effective cease-fire call--either in a formal resolution or in an appeal from its president--for lack of agreement on where cease-fire lines should be drawn. Any proposal calling for a return to the positions of October 6 would be countered by a Soviet and non-aligned proposal for a cease-fire at the 1967 lines and either proposal would be vetoed. For this afternoon's Council meeting, the British are considering introducing a compromise resolution which would call for immediate cessation of hostilities and peaceful settlement in accordance with Security Council Resolution 242. There is little indication that either side would welcome this formulation.

26. Today's Council meeting should also center on the Egyptian request that UN observers be removed from their posts to Cairo. These observers have supported the reports that the Arab forces were the first to cross the cease-fire lines. For this reason, and probably because Cairo and Damascus fear they will report on Arab military dispositions, Cairo wants them removed.

27. At Egyptian Foreign Minister Zayyat's request, the General Assembly debate of Middle East hostilities was suspended yesterday. The Assembly's regularly scheduled general debate, which continues through Wednesday, can be expected, however, to include numerous references to the Middle East from non-aligned states hostile to Israel.

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## ANNEX

Mid-East War: Supply and ResupplyINTRODUCTION

The fighting is becoming increasingly intense and the decisive battles will likely be fought in the next few days. The amount of ordnance and fuel consumed so far cannot be estimated with certainty because of the confused and contradictory reports being claimed by both sides. The estimates must be based on judgments concerning the types of ordnance used thus far and the numbers of men and equipment committed.

ISRAEL'S SITUATION :

Our over-all estimate is that the Israelis have sufficient quantities of ordnance of all kinds to pursue the war at a relatively heavy level of intensity for about two weeks. Israel's more immediate problem is one of distribution. Their capability to resupply, however, was amply demonstrated in the 1967 war and the "war of attrition" during the summer of 1970. If the Israelis can maintain air superiority, the troops in the field should not experience critical supply problems.

We continue to believe that by week's end the situation on both the Heights and along the Suez Canal will favor the Israelis. Some fighting will probably go on for another week, but at a much lower level. In this situation, the Israelis are believed to have enough fuel and ordnance to continue pursuing their military objectives for another two weeks.

THE ARAB SITUATION

The Syrians apparently have already thrown the bulk of their forces into the war. They reportedly

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have had severe losses in men and equipment

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In terms of fuel and ammunition left, we believe that because the Israelis have command of the air space over the Heights and because of the High level of intense fighting in that area during the past few days, the Syrian forces are probably now running short. Their logistical lines probably have been cut to some extent and it probably will be difficult for the Syrians to get fresh supplies. If the lines of supply could be opened, the Syrians probably have enough fuel and ordnance on hand to continue fighting for another five days or so.

#### THE EGYPTIAN SITUATION

The Egyptians are fighting a difficult war. Crossing a body of water and establishing a beachhead is a tough task for any army. Given this situation, resupply problems for the Egyptians are likely to become immediately pressing.

The Egyptians reportedly put up 11 bridges to move troops over the canal. Most of these apparently have been hit by Israeli bombs, but apparently the Egyptians have been able to get some of them back in operation under cover of darkness. If the Israelis can continue to control the air over the canal and are able to destroy the bridges during daylight hours, the resupply problems for Egyptian forces in Sinai should become severe.

Aside from the canal crossing problem, the Egyptians' over-all supply situation is believed to be sufficient for only about seven to ten days of heavy fighting. To date, no major resupply effort from the USSR is known to be under way.

Other Arab states have promised to furnish their hardware to the war effort and some aircraft reportedly have arrived. Little, if any, is expected to arrive at the front within the next few days, and--even over a longer period--the other Arab states have only relatively small amounts of equipment to offer. In any event,

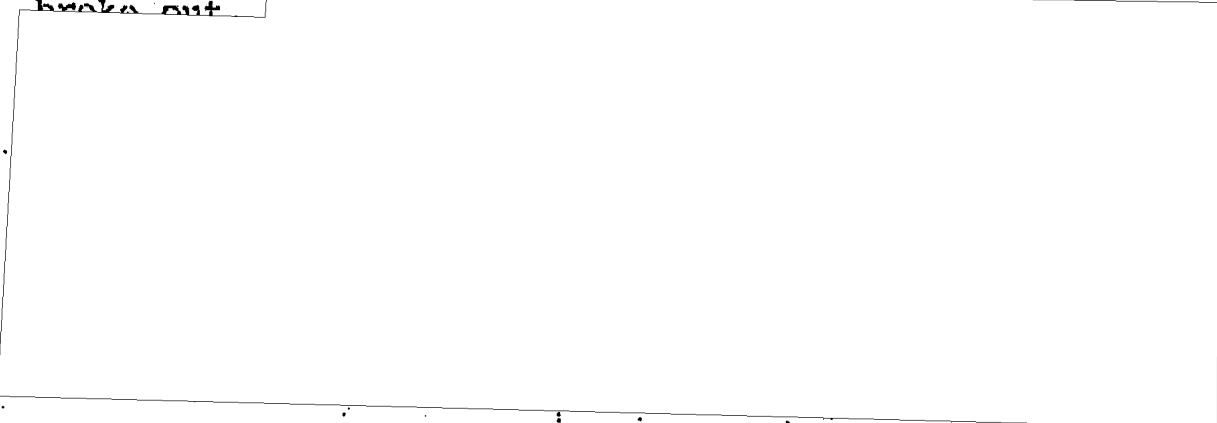
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this aid would not be of sufficient magnitude to influence the outcome of the war.

THE MAJOR SOURCE OF RESUPPLY--THE USSR

There is no indication of a Soviet effort to re-supply either Egypt or Syria. Only one Soviet arms carrier has departed the Black Sea since hostilities broke out.



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